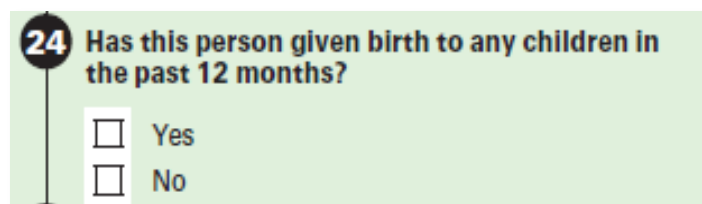


American Community Survey (ACS)

Why We Ask: Fertility

We ask whether a woman has given birth in the past 12 months to create fertility statistics. These statistics can be used to project the future size of the population, and to understand more about growing families.

Though local vital statistics offices typically have a count of births per year, ACS data is able to provide federal program planners, policy-makers and researchers with additional statistics about the age, education and employment of parents in households welcoming children, and other important information about the homes (age, size, etc.) and households (income, language spoken, etc.), for a more complete picture of growing families.

A screenshot of a questionnaire question. It features a green background with a black circle containing the number '24' on the left. To the right of the circle, the text reads 'Has this person given birth to any children in the past 12 months?'. Below this text are two checkboxes: the first is labeled 'Yes' and the second is labeled 'No'.

The question as it appears on the 2016 ACS paper questionnaire. This topic was introduced on the Decennial Census of 1940, and was transferred to the ACS when it replaced the Decennial Census long-form in 2005.

Examples of Federal Uses

- Required to estimate current and future populations eligible for certain federal programs and services, such as health care.
- Used in many reporting and research tasks in programs that investigate poverty, environmental justice, and children's health.

Examples of Other Uses

State and local agencies use these statistics, in combination with their vital statistics, to understand future demands on local education systems, health programs and services, etc. Businesses, especially in baby-related industries, use this information to focus activities in different areas based on fertility rate, and to understand their markets. Advocacy groups, such as those advocating for changing parental leave policies, may use these statistics to understand current and future challenges and to advocate for policies that benefit their groups.